609

From the rafters hung ten hammocks, as well as bows, arrows, bowls and other objects. The youth offered us a bowl filled with the fruit of the muriti palm (Mauritia venifera). he showed the greatest desire to [ 78] oblige us, and pronounced himself ready to accompany us to Necodemos if his father agreed. We blew our horn to call the father but no one appeared, and after waiting an hour I decided to move on and in fact did so, reluctantly leaving behind this engaging savage who had received me in his hut so cheerfully

In the afternoon, having crossed the forest, we walked out upon a vast plain and saw on the crest of a hill the malaca or village of Abenanti.

What excited me was that we always made such encounters when we least expected them, for I never succeeded in having the guide tell me beforehand what road we were to follow or what localities we were to encounter.

The village of Abenanti was under construction. It comprised but one large new house, with a thatch covered roof which consisted of a simple leaning wall, slanting down from east to west.

We found no one inside the house but the large number of hammocks, bows, and arrows which hung from the roof indicated that it was occupied by several families.

The fire was lit; as usual we blew our horn in order to call the occupants of the house.

It was not long before a slender youth appeared, a mistrustful look on his face, leading by the hand a small child who was very frightened and excited.

This youth was about twenty. his face was as yet completely painted. It merely bore the lozenges; that pen which consists of a solid layer of black dye, as per the custom of the tribe, had not yet been completed. These drawings, with their geometric regularity and [ 79] their fresh and vivid color, stood out on his youthful complexion and lent his features a certain novel consistency.

When night came they told me that a few men, women and children, who were running in to the malaca from the surrounding woods had stopped by a nearby stream and hesitated to come longer because of our presence.

In view of this I broke camp and moved about a mile away leaving my interpreter to spend the night in Abenanti and to convince those mistrustful people that we had not the slightest intention to harm them.

§13. I was making through every means to convince them that they would find dedicated friends among us, when they replied that Tete Burubé had told them H. M. the Emperor was a friend of the Mundurucu.

Tete Burubé was a Mundurucu who had left the villages many years previously, and returned after a long absence. He presented himself in the malocca of Celeste elegantly dressed after our fashion. His kinsmen greeted him with delight.

Then he told them that he had been baptized in Rio de Janeiro, that he had taken the name of Marcelino de Alcantara, and that H. M. the Emperor had served as his godfather and patron. He found in the malocca of Celeste various relatives, and in particular a sister who treated him with great devotion. When he had left his native village, at a very young age, he had been accompanied by a brother, and together they had travelled down the Cassiné River.

This Mundurucu painted a vivid image of the advantages of civilized life, without moving his kinsmen to renounce their savage existence.

Eventually the change in his way of life made him ill, and he came down with violent fevers.

It was said in the malocca that his elegant clothes had cast an evil spell upon him, so his sister angrily gathered them on the village grounds and set them ablaze.

As he recovered from his illness he met even greater distress, for now he was naked.

He finally died; his sister, who had not forsaken him as an invalid, buried him under her own hammock. [100]

## XII

### Population of the central Mundurucu malocas.

It is very difficult, indeed impossible, to furnish an exact census of these Indians, living as they do in malocas situated in inaccessible stretches of bush country.

| | |
|---|---|
| Cannapé | 500 |
| Caburé | 500 |
| Imburanas | 350 |
| Macapá | 300 |
| Urubeu | 250 |
| Caiamanum | 250 |
| Chacorão | 700 |
| Alto | 300 |
| Secobal (Missão) | 500 |
| Belbaet | 100 |
| Total | 10,000 |

These figures may be somewhat exaggerated, or at least the population of these malocas may have undergone considerable changes. The village of Chacorão, for example, is now abandoned, that of Belbaet is nearly extinct. Though it is certain that nowadays the numbers of strictly savage Mundurucu do not reach [102] 10,000 souls, I am convinced that the old population centers of the tribe, formerly established on the banks of the Upper and Lower Tapajos, in themselves exceeded this figure by far. These last-mentioned groups settled in the old missions, or incorporated themselves little by little into the Christian population in such a way that their descendants today do not even understand the dialect of the tribe.

XIII

## Malocas of Secobalum -- Plan of Mundurucu malocas

Secobalum is located on a hill, in the center of a vast plain, not far from the woods.

In the center of the maloca stands the ciçá or warriors' quarters.

The ciçá consists of an elongated house, about one hundred meters long, roofed with thatch, its whole length open towards the

342 east. Thus oriented, the house is excellently ventilated and im-
341 mune from the invasion of gnats and other insufferable mosquitoes, which are the agency of those who live in the heart of the forest or on the banks of streams. The rays of the rising sun penetrate freely into the house and overcome the morning cold, which is quite intense. The ring is only for sound men, warriors, and
343 their sons over eight years of age.

343 Each warrior slings his hammock wherever he pleases inside the house.

351 On the grounds, and also towards the east, stand three rows of posts connected by crosbeams where the warriors sling their hammocks on clear summer nights. [103]

352 Each warrior keeps within his reach everything he owns, hanging from the roof of the ring above his hammock -- bows, arrows, wristlets, and hats.

352 They all sleep in hammocks woven of cotton thread and so
353 small that they must lie motionless so as not to fall on the floor.

353 The cotton is planted by the Indian women, who also pre-
354 pare the thread and the netting.

354 Inside the ring, many fires burn at night amid the warriors' hammocks.

342 Around the ring stand the houses of the women, which also
341 shelter the children of both sexes, the decrepit old men, and the sick.

In Necoderman these houses are five in number, quite large built with greater care [than the ring], higher and completely enclosed, having as a door only one opening or sometimes two. There are no interior partitions whatever; the house is altogether communal. But the mothers, with their children, their decrepit old men, and their sick, each take care of one part of the house and
352 there hang their hammocks. Near them they keep their implements, namely, looms, looms, baskets, etc. In the center of
353 the house stand one or two ovens to make maniac flour; they consist merely of crude stones, more or less flattened, standing on other stones. A fire burns under this oven. The warriors may
342 come into the women's house whenever they please, but the women never set foot in the ring. It is in the women's houses that the more precious objects are kept, such as feather ornaments, necklaces of human teeth, enemy heads, etc.

But the Munduruco are cultivators and hunters. Their crude husbandry cannot provide them with plentiful resources. And hunting, even on those plains that teem with game, could never supply with regularity a large population center. As game becomes less abundant, the hunters are forced to wander ever farther to find it.

The need and taste for hunting, instead of bringing men together, tends on the contrary to isolate them increasingly, for isolation is the only means of avoiding competition in this sport upon which their very existence actually depends.

No other motive is to be sought for the dispersal of Munduruco families during the summer months. As already mentioned above, I came upon some of those families in the course of my travels, living as huts in the midst of the woods or on the banks of the Cadeteu.

In spite of everything, however, the tribe remains strongly united although divided into twenty villages.

It is true that the villages owe allegiance to no central government, either civil or religious, but the moral bonds which hold together all the villages and all the individual members of the tribe are so strong that they have withstood all divisive influences through the long history of the tribe. [113]

Among the Munduruco, marriage consists of a simple agreement between the marriage partners and their families, and is not invested with any religious character or formulas.

Sometimes a Munduruco is betrothed to a young girl through an agreement with her family, and thenceforth treats her as his future wife, supplying her with game and other means of subsistence until she reaches puberty and the marriage is consummated.

From the moment of the agreement, the betrothed girl is respected by all as such, and no one dares dispute her with the man destined to become her husband.

The marriage, once celebrated, constitutes a strong bond between the spouses. Polygamy is not practiced in this tribe, and scenes of jealousy are not infrequent.

The village women, though overburdened with work, are treated with a certain regard; they are not even permitted to enter the ciçá or warriors' quarters.

171 But they
381 do have one curious custom in common with their neighbors the Maues. They expose their daughters to continuous fasting and to the smoke in the gable of the hut when the latter pass from childhood to womanhood.

244 In agriculture the Mundrucus have an advantage over others only
[161] in as much as the power of their numerous and warlike tribe (I heard a figure of 18,000 given and even one of 40,000) makes their plantations more secure; also the rather dense population make dependence on hunting and fishing alone unfeasible. They grow some cotton and a great deal of manioc. The flour ground from manioc is packed in
[437] baskets and the wide leaves of palms, spice stalks [Würzschilfe] and heliconias and regularly sold to the mariners in Tapajoz now that they have established friendly relations. In the area near the Brazilians
● 361 each family lives by itself in a conical hut. Today these are often not built individually in isolated places throughout the forest but are grouped into villages. Those Indians not yet in a neighborhood of whites occupy large, open huts as a community of several families. But even in the
[127] mission I found near their houses the preserved heads of slain enemies and numerous skulls of larger game animals stuck up on poles. Everything about the appearance of these savages made it evident that they consider themselves mighty hunters and warriors and that they strive to maintain their hegemony in the area. To this their name has reference.
101 It is from the Tupi language. Mundrucus, Mondorucus means either: "those who plunder together" (from monda "steal," ru "together," cu, co "plantation, property), or: "those who practice (ico) cutting off (mondoc)", that is to say cutting off heads. Moturicus, from motumun moteryc and ico, means: "the shaker, the thief [Mitnchmer]." [391] Very widespread is the nickname Paiquizé, Paia-kyce, that is "Father Knife, Decapitator." Castelnau (III. 106) lists the Arupás as living among the Mundrucus on both banks of the Arinos, and they are probably identical with the Oropias already mentioned (p. 204, 383) who are also found on the Madeira river.

726 Their military organization is begun in peacetime. Every man capable of bearing arms cuts a notch in a stick that is sent around and by this he pledges his participation in war. In wartime the chief has power of life and death over the individual. That they were in a state of war with the Apiacas was not told me. * For their attacks they

* The Picobyé (in Pohl II. 183) or Paicobejé do not belong here but are a tribe belonging to the Macamecrans.

4: Horton E-4 (no date) 1948

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226 Barbed arrows are used more commonly than hook and line in fishing.
224 Strömer's vocabulary (1932) includes references to basket traps and weirs. Fish and crocodiles are drugged with poison from twigs and leaves of the timbó.

252 **Food preparation.**—Cooking is women's work. Dishes mentioned in the literature include roasted sweet potato, banana mush, manioc broth, cará, fruit soup, and a dish consisting of Brazil nuts which have been washed, soaked in water, smoked, crushed, and roasted. Meat is roasted on a babracot of green sticks or on a slanting spit. Strömer's vocabulary includes a word for manioc press and a phrase meaning "roasting house for manioc meal." Mortar and pestle are reported. Beverages are made [272] from wild beans, cacao, and manioc meal mixed with honey and water. [273] The *Mundurucú* had no native alcoholic beverages.

[276] They raise tobacco and smoke it in the form of cigars wrapped in tauari bark.

VILLAGES AND HOUSES

●361 Tocantins and Farabee imply that the dwellings are arranged around the periphery of an open village plaza in the center of which is the men's house. Bates, however, mentions a settlement of 30 houses scattered for a distance of 6 or 7 miles along a river bank; and Martius (Spix and Martius, 1823–31, vol. 3) speaks of houses arranged in rows in a forest clearing.

344 The men's house (ekça) occupied by the warriors, is a prominent feature
562 of the village. Tocantins describes one 100 m. (325 feet) long, covered
571 with thatch and open on one of its long sides. A photograph of a men's house in Farabee (1917 a) shows a rectangular structure, smaller and more crudely built than the dwelling house, with a gable roof and incompletely enclosed sides. The warriors slung their hammocks from posts inside it during the winter and from a series of posts set in three parallel rows and united by cross beams, in the village plaza, during the summer. Although warfare is no longer an important aspect of *Mundurucú* life, the men's house still serves as a men's work place and as a dwelling for the unmarried men. Women are not permitted to enter it.

342 The dwelling house (ekça, "big house") photographed by Farabee is a
[562] long, rectangular, windowless structure with a high thatched roof and low walls. The men's door is in the center of the long side facing the men's house; the women's door is directly opposite. Strömer describes the house as a long, rectangular building with a roof sloping to the ends and sides, and with rising peaks at each end of the roof crest, but in a later publication (1937) he speaks of the house as "dome-shaped." In the 1850's, Bates found that most of the dwellings had conical roofs and walls of framework filled with mud. The roof was covered with palm thatch, and the eaves extended halfway to the ground. Martius also reported conical roofs.

deer were also more effectively hunted in groups, not only because of the advantages of the ambush, but because an arrow wound is frequently not fatal, especially at longer range, and, if there are two or three hunters, the possibilities of successfully dispatching the animals are increased.

Fishing

Fishing was an economic activity definitely secondary to hunting, although as we will see later, the circumstances of acculturation have changed one large section of the tribe to a group which relies primarily on fish for proteins. The aboriginal Mundurucú generally built their villages in places several hours inland from the nearest navigable streams. Thus their defensive position was improved while in no way impairing their attacking power. This settlement pattern was well adapted to a warrior society, but removed them from the best fishing sites. The small streams within easy reach of the villages yielded only smaller species of fish and in limited quantity. That the Mundurucú relied little on the water system for food or transportation is shown by the fact that only in recent times has the dugout canoe been adopted on even a small scale. The usual modern Mundurucú canoe is of the double ended plank type made by the Brazilians and sold to the Indians by the rubber traders. In pre-contact times, the only water craft used was the bark canoe of the type described by Von den Steinen on the upper Xingú River.[8] Not even this canoe was native to the Mundurucú for they acknowl-

8. Steinen, 1894, pp. 229-225.

Tribal integration was also aided by the ceremonial [illegible], which in nearly all cases brought people from a number of villages together in a host village. Despite the lack of central political controls the Munduruú can be called a tribe in that they were united by interpersonal connections and were able to act as a political entity under temporary political controls.

The village

At present there are eighteen Munduruú villages having an average population of fifty to sixty people. The balance of the population of 1800 are living in isolated groups usually consisting of one small extended family or, at times, only one nuclear family. It is impossible to judge exactly how many villages there were in earlier times or what their populations were. The shifting settlement pattern makes a plotting of old villages indecisive and the climate and vegetation destroy all vestiges of abandoned villages after about twenty years. The sources are next to useless on this point. Tocantins, one of the few men who reported on a trip to a 19th century Munduruú village, states that the village of "Karodeuna" (Kaladyan is the correct transcription) consisted of five houses and a men's house.[12] He had previously cited the statistics of one Joaquim Cerves, then Director of the Indians of the Tapajós River, to show that this village had a population of 2100, a patent absurdity.[13] The best estimate based on informant data gives a maximum population

12. Tocantins, 1877, p. 103.

13. Ibid., p. 101.

●[illegible] 603 to 900 for the old Mundurucu villages.

The aboriginal Mundurucu village consisted of three to five dwelling places and the men's house, or ehry.* The average population was about 250 people. Commonly, these villages were located on stretches of high savannah. Such a site was easily defensible as its open location protected it from the surprise attacks always used by Amazonian Indians. Also, these locations were relatively free of insects. The [illegible]undurucu say too that "It is beautiful here for you can see far."

362 The houses were oblong with rounded ends and had steeply pitched thatched roofs. Some houses were 80 to 100 feet in length. The eaves of the roofs terminated at about five feet from the ground and the house was closed by vertical bark walls. Short ends of the center stalks of palm fronds were used.

366 The men's house was a large lean-to type building, the open end of which always faced west. It was up to 200 feet long and had a roof that gently sloped from the east end, at which point it was about fifteen to twenty feet high, until it met the ground at the west end. The front and both sides were open. Adjoining the south side of the east end [illegible]ther the men's house was the small room in which the sacred trumpets, forbidden to female eyes, were kept. Three horizontal beams, one in the middle and one on either side of the house, ran from east to west at about five feet above

164 * The phonetic system used above and throughout this work is, with a few exceptions, that of English. The exceptions are: ã is pronounced like the German ä; ĩ and ũ are pronounced as in Portuguese lare and user, respectively.

the ground. Between these beams, the men stretched their hammocks to sleep.

Like all Tropical Forest Indian villages, the Munduruú village shifted location every five to ten years due to the exhaustion of nearby stands of high forest in which to make gardens. Each village had a definite area, usually a certain savannah, in which it moved. After 30 to 50 years a new forest cover on previously used land made it adaptable to horticulture again. Today, the reduced population of the contemporary villages makes frequent village shift due to lack of garden land unnecessary, but a new village is built every ten years due to the rapid decay of the houses, and also because the immediate environs become overgrown with weeds that are soon infested with insects and snakes. The locale of the new village was chosen by common consent, and the houses were built collectively. The last structure to be built was the men's house. Until it was built the flutes were kept in the old men's house.

The men's house

The Munduruú exhibited the most complete development of the male-female social division and accompanying men's house complex to be found in South America. Among the Canayura, the men's house is a ritual center.[14] Among the Jurúna, it serves this function and is also a bachelor's and young men's sleeping quarter.[15] However, all the Munduruú males from the age of about seventeen, warred, gathered and held council,

14. Oberg, 1948, p. 84.

15. Calbacchini, 1942, p. 38.

6: Murdy E-5 (1952-1953)1954
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Tapajós town established a continuing and peaceful relationship with the whites after the destructive traumata which so frequently accompany acculturation. Certain far reaching changes in social structure had taken place, but the tie maintained its autonomy and physical isolation. The rubber trade had used an expansion in agricultural production, and warfare was pursued on the mixed motivations of material reward and the taking of trophy heads, the aboriginal rationale for Munduruká warfare.

At this writing there were at least twenty Munduruká villages, having a total population of approximately 3000. The communities were located in the middle of the seventeenth century, secure from surprise attacks and free of the insects endemic of the larger, navigable streams. Paths radiated out from each village to the streams, gardens, hunting trails, and to other villages. In this setting people led a secure existence. Their location and reputation for ferocity protected them from attack, and the dependable supply of game, fish, garden products, and wild vegetables and fruits gave them security from hunger.

## TRIBAL INTEGRATION

The new villages of the Munduruká were politically autonomous but were linked by a set of institutions and culture patterns into a socio-cultural whole. The Munduruká felt themselves to be a unitary group, and village membership was of less importance in self-identification than was membership in the non-localized clans. The feeling of being one of the "people," as they called themselves. A primary dichotomy in the Munduruká world view was the separation of humanity into "people" and "outlanders." "Outlanders," with the exception of the whites and the Apiacá Indians, were beings with whom the "people" could have only hostile relationships. This provided the justification for the systematic destruction and dispersal of neighboring tribes by Munduruká war parties. Tribal membership, however, was a sociological and not a genetic concept. Male and female "outlanders" were killed and decapitated, but their children were taken captive and brought back to the Munduruká villages. The they were adopted by their captors and given the elaborate body and hair tattooing which was the external symbol of identity with the ingroup. Thereafter and roles of captives were no different than those of any other Munduruká.

While unbending hostility and violence characterized the Munduruká attitude towards the outside world, the reverse was true of intragroup relations. Conflict between villages was unheard of, and interpersonal aggression were suppressed. This emphasis upon harmony and noncompetitiveness had a strong functional interrelationship with the socio-economic structure of the villages, in which co-operative production and collectivized consumption were basic.

Although different villages did not co-operate in the subsistence economy, warfare and ceremony involved intercommunity organization and participation. Since our statements of function involve a relation of mutual interdependence, it would not beg the question to say that intervillage war parties

[i.e. The mid- of the seventeenth century.—Analyst]

7: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953)1957 SQ17 Munduruca SQ13



tional subsistence activities, it placed severe inhibitions upon the extension of certain formerly customary.

Warfare did not end until about 1912, over a century after the Munduruú had made peace with the whites. During this time certain internal modifications had occurred in the social structure, but social cohesion had remained intact and the boundaries of the society were still sharply defined and vigorously maintained. Although members were lost to Brazilian society, a hard core of population living near the upper Tapajós River made war upon other Indian groups with energy and success. This was not "aboriginal" warfare; it was frequently waged on behalf of the whites and with firearms supplied by them. But the only information on Munduruú warfare of any value pertains to the 19th century and was derived from older informants and published sources. This, then, is the proper time dimension of our study, and we turn now to a consideration of the relevant aspects of Munduruú culture during this period.

The Munduruú villages were located in the midst of grass-covered savannahs surrounded by dense forest, but their subsistence economy was essentially the same as other groups of the Amazon rain forest. Hunting was important throughout the year, and felling was primarily a dry season activity. Garden crops included the usual range of Tropical Forest vegetables and fruits, and bitter manioc was the staple product. Manioc flour, known as *farinha* in Brazil, was also traded to the whites by the Munduruú and constituted their most important commercial commodity in the period prior to the rubber boom.

The division of labor and the organization of work reflected certain basic aspects of Munduruú social structure. The men hunted and fished and carried out the strenuous task of garden clearing, while the women did the rest of the horticultural work and tended the households. Residence was matrilocal, and the females of each house formed a nucleus of matrilineally related kinswomen; each such household was also a communal work and consumption unit. Each Munduruú village had about three or five such houses and a men's house; the latter was the locus of male activity, for all the village men slept, ate, worked, and relaxed within its confines.

The membership of the men's house was eclectic in relation to descent. The Munduruú were divided into more than forty patrilineal clans, linked by loose and tenuous phratric affiliations, and paralleled almost equally between patrilineal, exogamous moieties. But the matrilocal residence rule and the resultant shift of men from their natal households and, commonly, villages continually limited the formation of co-resident descent groups.

Despite the diversity of their local and lineal origins, the men of a village, and ultimately of the whole tribe, were expected to maintain harmonious and cooperative relations. Cooperation in economic activities transcended the minimal necessities of their ecological adaptation, and any open show of aggression between men was strictly prohibited. The men's house provided the organizational framework within which this unity was expressed, while male

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position of establishing recent matrilineal families has not been adequately described for South America.

The Nambicuara have been in active contact with European civilizations for the last 150 years, of which only 40 years have been spent in outright exploitation. The following description of the pre-contact period Nambicuara does not purport to depict the pre-contact, or aboriginal, Nambicuara, but refers to the middle of the nineteenth century. Earlier changes in Nambicuara culture form the subject of another paper (Murphy 1956).

The Nambicuara have inhabited the rolling forests and savannah lands east of the upper Tapajós River in the state of Mato Grosso, Brazil, for at least two centuries. The savannah in this region is quite limited, and the predominant flora are the high forest and thick vegetation typical of the Amazon basin. The Nambicuara chose the open country for their villages because resistance from the larger stronger aborigines was protection from disease-bearing insects and relief from the swamps of insects which infest the river banks. While the presence of forests immediately adjoining the villages gave some security against the Sanumá attacks (enemy), by nearly all tribes of the region. These attacks were difficult to launch without canoes. Since the Nambicuara used water transportation only sparingly, isolation from the Sanumá was not a hardship.

It has been noted that the nineteenth century Nambicuara and Northwestern Kilpetsáuna were on the same level of sociocultural integration. The simple, [illegible]-oriented material having bands of the Kilpetsáuna were roughly equivalent to the semi-sedentary villages of the Nambicuara. In both instances, the local group consisted of a multi-family, autonomous community. Under certain circumstances, the various Nambicuara villages tended to integrate on a tribal level. But there were no permanent inter-village political controls. That an aboriginal village could function in isolation, since there was inter-village marriage and periodic cooperation in warfare and ceremonialism, does not necessarily imply a higher level of integration in economic or political activities. Probably, it can be argued that Northwestern Kilpetsáuna bands were autonomous but by no means isolated from other such units.

The Nambicuara and Kilpetsáuna were integrated on the same level, but their cultures differed structurally or typologically and in content. Matrilineal clans and moieties in Nambicuara society made kinship ties more extensive and pervasive. Village subsistence was based on slash-and-burn horticulture. Although the heavy work of clearing the forest was done by male groups consisting of all the village males, garden care and manioc processing were carried out by the women of the matrilocal extended family. The chief occupations of the men were hunting and warfare.

Lowie's reconstruction of the aboriginal society of the Eastern Bontuguara shows the nuclear family to have had greater functional importance than among the Nambicuara. The Bontuguara family was a relatively stable unit within the shifting and amorphous hunting bands, whereas the Nambicuara pattern was the converse. Each Nambicuara household was a stable unit composed of women and their female offspring. The Nambicuara had the seeming paradox of matrilocal extended families in a society of patrilineal clans and moieties. The men married into these extended families from various units in the same village or from other villages. However, there was no need to integrate a husband into the extended matrilocal family of the household, because the focus of his activities was the men's house. All males spent evening activities except in the men's house, which was located in the exact [illegible] position of the circle of houses composing the village. The females of each household prepared and sent food to the men's house to be eaten in a communal meal. The men's house was also the center of male work and relaxation. The most [illegible] symbolic tie of a man to his wife's house was that he brought his daily [illegible] of game there. Communal distribution of game, however, made this economically

9: Murphy & Steward E-9 (1952-1953) 1956
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930
178

station. After extended trading had become strongly established among one section of the Mundurucu, however, "friends" were chosen by the Indian agent and by missionaries in order to control the general behavior of the Indians, and not specifically for commercial purposes. This more nearly approximates the modern Portuguese situation, although it was reached through a different sequence of functional roles and from a different aboriginal base. In both cases, the Indians themselves were very conscious that these men were not genuine chiefs in terms of aboriginal leadership patterns, and both groups eventually suspected that the white-recognized chief was promoting the interests of the white man rather than those of his own people. The new leadership patterns never became fully established. While these patterns were functional in terms of white-Indian relations, they were dysfunctional in terms of the native socio-cultural structure.

Among the Mundurucú, therefore, the integrity of the local socio-political groups was, in part, temporarily maintained by a change in the functional role of the chieftain. That the changed patterns of leadership eventually became dysfunctional resulted in part from the ecological adaptations necessary to rubber collection. These adaptations, however, did far more than contribute to the disintegration of political controls. They undermined the very economic basis of village life.

Rubber trees. The native and most common species of rubber tree, *Hevea*, grows wild throughout the upper waters of the Amazon. It can be exploited only during the dry season, but, in the upper Tapajós River valley, the maximum length of the gathering season is from May to early December, approximately seven months. Since these trees are scattered throughout the low lands near the watercourses, they are reached by canoe-trips cut through the undergrowth. The spacing of the trees and the work involved in rubber collection generally limit the number of trees tapped daily to not more than one-hundred and fifty or less. Some collectors improve their yield per tree by experimenting two or three separate avenues which they visit only every second or third day. The distribution of rubber trees is such that each avenue gives access to trees within an area of about three to five square miles. The actual size of this territory depends, of course, upon the density of the rubber trees. In some sections of the Amazon drainage wild rubber is more abundant than are others. One may travel ten to twenty miles on reaches of river where rubber is sparse without passing a single habitation, but, where rubber is more plentiful, one encounters houses at intervals of a mile or even a half-mile.

314

The rubber tapper must work in his avenue or avenues almost daily, and therefore must live near them. Since each tapper exploits a considerable tract of land, the physical remoteness from neighboring tappers is a matter of necessity. Thus, on the Tapajós River, which has a population of about 3,000 excluding the Mundurucú, there are only two Brazilian villages of any consequence. One of these has a population of about 700, and the other has only 150 people. The other settlements are merely hamlets consisting of a trading post and from ten to seven houses. The majority of the population live in isolated houses on the river banks.

[34]

The exploitation of wild rubber is a solitary, individual occupation in that the tapping of the tree, the subsequent collection of the latex, and the final coagulation process are one-man jobs. The last phase, carried out at the end of the day, consists of solidifying the latex over a smoky fire. The simplicity and the daily time-schedule of the entire rubber process is economic in such that no one can profitably leave off collection to specialize only in tapping or collection or coagulation. For similar reasons, two men do not work in the same avenue. However cooperable, it would not be a practicable means of increasing production.

This brief account of how wild rubber is exploited is necessary to an understanding of changes in Mundurucu society. In the earlier contact period, the 434

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Despite the flourishing trade in produce, the allure of most trade goods lay more in their sheer utility than in their exotic qualities. The increased efficiency of the Mundurucu economy made possible by steel tools must have been enormous.

The parallels in these basic processes of acculturation between the Mundurucu and the Montagnais are probably to be found also among most aborigines. In the case of the Mundurucu, the displacement of aboriginal crafts by commercial goods better suited to most local needs, both old and new, inexorably led to increased dependency of the people upon those who fabricated these goods and therefore to a greater involvement in economic patterns external to their own culture.

The Mundurucu families, like those of the Algonkians, became dependents of the trading posts. More than a century ago, Bates related that Brazilian traders made seasonal expeditions to trade with the Mundurucu. After rubber became important in the Amazon, permanent trading posts were established on the upper Tapajós River. These posts, whether owned by individuals or companies, exercised such control over tracts of rubber-producing forest that they compelled the rubber collector to trade exclusively with them. They accomplished this by their power of transportation and by holding the collector in debt. The traders among the Mundurucu were never able to obtain title of ownership to the rubber regions within Mundurucu country proper,[2] but they made the Indians dependent upon them in a very real sense through their credit arrangements. In time, all of the Mundurucu villages came under the control of various traders, who were so influential by virtue of being necessary to the Indians that they were able to appoint the "chief", in violation of Indian tradition, and thereby intensified their control over the Indians.

The progressive weakening of the hereditary chief, whose authority was based upon aboriginal activities, was furthered by the decline in warfare. The post-white warfare, although frequently necessary in character and auxiliary to European occupation and expansion, continued the native pattern of authority. The Indians were paid in trade goods. When, at the end of the nineteenth century, the central Amazon region had been pacified, the military help of the Mundurucu was no longer needed. Meanwhile, rubber collecting had become the principal means by which the Indians acquired foreign trade articles. Since the Indians were important to rubber production in labor-starved Amazonia, they were pushed to greater efforts by the traders. Increased devotion of the Mundurucu to rubber production correspondingly interfered with their warfare; for in earlier times the rubber season was the time for war. When in 1854 a Franciscan mission was established in their midst, the earlier political and economic basis of Mundurucu warfare was so undermined that the admonitions of the priests that they live in peace were quite effective.

At the end of the second stage of Mundurucu acculturation, only bonds of kinship and economic collectivity in producing food for the group held Mundurucu society together. Much of the old structure was gone. The chieftaincy had been undermined, warfare had ended, and reliance upon the outside economy was taking effect. During the nineteenth century, increasing numbers of Mundurucu who had difficulties with their co-residents were able to leave their villages permanently. Many others left in order to participate more fully in the rubber economy.

Full dependency upon rubber collection is not compatible with village life. Since the aboriginal Mundurucu villages were located several days foot travel from the rubber areas fringing the rivers, a family participating both in collective village life and the rubber economy had to migrate seasonally between its village and its house in the rubber area. Families living in this manner could spend only three to four months in rubber production. The only way the Indians can devote their full efforts to rubber tapping is to leave the villages of the interior savannah and live permanently near the rubber trees along the river banks. A large

[illegible]

portion of the Upper Xingu, where increased need of and desire for trade goods could no longer be satisfied by the yield of only three months' work in the rubber economy, have made this choice.

These families represent the third stage of Mundurucú acculturation. Their resettlement in the village region, however, has occurred in two ways. The first is a direct and complete adaptation to rubber collection, which can be studied in many contemporary upland villages. People desiring to increase their income from barter improve their rubber groves known to each of many patrilineally [illegible] during the rains, plant gardens, and remain there. Although their contacts re[illegible]ships with the upland villagers, the core of their social lives lie increasingly within the circle of the communities of scattered families dependent upon the trading posts. The final step in their incorporation into the local Brazilian economy and the culmination of this acculturation process will come when they abandon horticulture [illegible] and become full time wage workers in the rubber economy, and, like their Brazilian neighbors and the American businessmen, depend upon trade for the bulk of their food supply.

The second mode of readaptation to the rubber economy, while ending in the same type of settlement pattern and social organization as the first, involves passage through an intermediate phase. The previously mentioned migration on the Tapajós River had indifferent success in attracting the Mundurucú until the 1920's, when a policy of trading with the Indians was adopted. The missionaries were honest and generous in their commercial relations, and rubber-tapping became more profitable to the Indians. Their extraordinary collecting activities resulted in a general movement to the heads of the Tapajós River, and by the 1930's many interior villages had been abandoned.

The migrants settled so heavily on the river banks that they were able to maintain [illegible] in new villages. These villages, however, lacked the men's organization, division of labor, and collective patterns which structured the old type villages. Although the population shift from the old to new villages was heavy, it involved individual families rather than whole villages. The new villages grew as additional nuclear families arrived from the scattered communities. During this period of growth, since the new villages consisted of families, many of which had not previously been connected with one another, each family had to [illegible] on the subsistence activities which were formerly the function of the extended family and village. Gardens were cleared and planted by husband and wife with whatever aid their children [illegible] capable of giving. Fish, taken by family members from the nearby rivers, steadily replaced game formerly taken in collective hunts as the major source of protein. Meanwhile, increased rubber production enabled the Indians to buy new tools, lines, and canoes with which fishing was made more effective. As the [illegible] villages grew larger, the elementary division of labor was perpetuated, and the nuclear family became the basic unit of production.

Political authority on the Tapajós River was almost nonexistent. The migrants began to trade as individuals, [illegible] with the missionaries and later with the newly established Indian Post. This economic break stripped the "chiefs" of one of their last remaining functions, and their role was reduced to that of intermediary between the villagers and the private and Indian agent.

The amorphously structured villages which arose on the banks of the Tapajós River represent a transition to [illegible] family level and are not the culmination of adaptation to the ecology of rubber collection. Most of the residents of the Tapajós River still have to reside away from their villages during the rubber season, but the easy communication made possible by canoe transportation allows the majority to return to rubber production after planting their gardens.

The new individualism and fragmented division of labor, combined with facets of the old culture which had become [illegible] in the new situation, contributed

Map 2. Montbarrois territory and villages.

12 Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1958
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of the stream is wild and solitary. The jungle overhangs the water and only once in a great while does a tiny mattle-and-daub house, the home of a collector of wild rubber, appear in a small clearing. At even greater intervals, the launch passes or stops at little hamlets of three to six such houses, which form the trading centers of the scattered collector population.

Several days and barely 300 miles of this travel bring the voyager to the trading posts which conduct sporadic business with one segment of the Munduruvú population. There are a few such establishments, all situated on the Tapajós River near the mouths of its eastern tributaries, the Cadiveú, Cabitutú, and São Tomé. A number of Munduruvú villages are at the headwaters of the latter streams, and an occasional Indian, distinguished by tattooing, unusually rugged or ill-fitting clothing, and impassivity of facial expression can often be seen at the trading posts. Racially, the Munduruvú does not stand out sharply, for Caucasoid genes are as thoroughly distributed among the Indian population as are Indian genes among the local Brazilians.

If one wishes to reach the village of Cabitutú, a typical Munduruvú community of the savannah lands east of the Tapajós, it is necessary to ascend the Cabitutú River in a canoe. After five days, or more during the rainy season, of down-to-dusk paddling, the port of the village is reached. This consists of a cleared stretch of river bank and a trail that leads to a house about 100 yards away. The house is usually occupied only during the dry season, when some residents of Cabitutú go there to pass the summer in fishing and rubber collecting. To reach the village, one must walk a half-day overland from this point. A well-beaten trail leads from the valley of the Cabitutú and over a ridge, dipping down again to cross a small stream. It continues through the forest and then abruptly emerges onto a sun-scorched savannah. The journey is then near an end, and a few miles of slow but steady ascent through the grasslands and past isolated clumps of forest bring one to the village.

The majority of the Munduruvú now live on the banks of the larger streams of the area in order to have convenient access to the rubber trees that grow there. Only 300 Indians live in the contemporary savannah villages, but 700 beside on the Cururú River in contact with a Brazilian Indian Service post and a Roman Catholic mission staffed by Franciscan priests. Another 200, the most acculturated part of the population, live among the Brazilian population of the Tapajós River. But the region of mixed savannah and gallery forest east of the Tapajós River is their traditional habitat. Most of the events recounted in their mythology are believed to have occurred there, and this has been their homeland throughout the historic period and, according to Munduruvú tradition, since the creation of man.

The modern savannah communities have preserved traditional Munduruvú architecture and village plan to a greater extent than the riverine groups. Each has two to five dwelling houses and a men's house, arranged in a circle about a central plaza. But whereas the plazas formerly served as ceremonial and dance grounds and were kept free of weeds, they are now rank with underbrush. And the houses are considerably smaller, reflecting the diminished population of the

11: Murphy E-9 (1952-1953) 1954
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as the men's house called in haste and then slowly roasted and dried out over a fire. Tobacco smoke is blown upon it, and sweet manioc broth is occasionally poured upon it to please and feed it. The dried fetus is believed to become transformed in time into a baby *tapir* sustaining the mother of the tapir, and the shaman places it near one of the posts at the headwaters of the streams. Even weaker shamans can make the *bia* fit, and any pregnant tapir serves this purpose.

Although the manufacture of a *bia* is was never witnessed during our residence among the Munduruci, I was able to observe the preparation of a mother of the peccary in the savannah village of Cabruá. On this day, the hunters had chased a band of peccary that had passed close to the village. The band, however, had a fair head start on the hunters and escaped, leaving a half-grown member behind. The dogs cornered the animal in a bush, and the hunters were about to capture it as a pet when the shaman arrived on the scene. He ordered the men and their dogs to stand back while he smoked intently and concentrated his gaze upon the animal. He then announced that the young peccary was carrying the mother of the peccary, or *daje bi*, within its body. As the news spread, all the villagers came out to gaze upon the animal and to admire its "beauty," evidently arriving thereby to gratify the spirit. The shaman then grabbed the squealing peccary and set upon it, while another shaman assisted it by its snout. A third shaman pulled out the animal's eyebrows and some hair from its back and released it unharmed. The first shaman then brought the hairs back to the trumpet chamber adjoining the men's house and placed them inside the hollow limb of a buriti palm. Every day thereafter he blew smoke upon his creation and poured a sweet manioc drink over it. After a period of this treatment it was believed that the hairs would turn into a young peccary with the mother of the peccary inside it. The animal would similarly be carried to one of the deep pools in the neighborhood and would attract herds of peccary. Strong shamans, it was believed, could make the *daje bi* from the hairs of any peccary, but weaker practitioners, as in this instance, had to select an animal that already had a *daje bi* within it.

## Other Functions of the Shaman

In addition to his curing activities and his role in the propitiation of the spirit mothers, the shaman performs a variety of lesser duties. When the village is moved to a new locale every ten years or so, the shaman must inspect the site selected. He ascertains if there are many fever-producing *ewaik* in the neighborhood, and he looks also for signs of the *Ferupari* and other malignant beings. These malevolent forces can also exist below the surface of the ground, and the shaman must send his *wawek* to inspect the earth below the proposed village site. After the instrument has completed its investigation, it returns to the shaman and tells him of its discoveries.

The shaman, through another of his instruments, the *shibbit*, can also discover lost persons and lost or stolen objects. He blows smoke upon the *shibbit*—a small piece of cane—and sends it upon its mission. In the case of a stolen object,* the

* Theft is extremely rare among the Munduruci and probably owes its occasional occurrence to the contemporary acquisition of trade goods.

U:Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
SQ13 Munduruca SQ13

## THE SETTING

try of the Tapajós River. To the north, the terrain is covered by dense rain forest, but south of the Mundurucú country are great stretches of savannah that continue into the Planalto de Mato Grosso. Their distinct preference for unforested village locales could only have been acquired in their present home or further south. The previously mentioned cultural characteristics suggest the latter, although I can at present offer no further corroboration of this possibility.

Although the Mundurucú regard their traditional homeland as the area of mixed gallery forest and savannah between the Cururú and Tropas rivers, only about 300 of the 1,250 surviving Indians live there. Another 700 live along the banks of the Cururú itself, and approximately 200 on the Tapajós River and tributary streams. The person in search of the exotic would be sorely disappointed at his first contact with the Mundurucú. They dress in Western style garments, albeit ill-fitting and ragged, and they adorn themselves with glass beads, brilliantine, plastic combs, and religious medallions. The five-gallon gasoline can is a far more important artifact than the clay pot, and they cook in aluminum pans. Since the Indian strain is so strong in the genetic make-up of the north Brazilian, the Mundurucú do not stand out sharply from their neighbors in physical characteristics. This is especially true of the younger Mundurucú who are no longer tattooed from head to foot as their parents were.

The way of life of the Mundurucú residents of the Tapajós shore is especially close to that of their Brazilian neighbors. That the fundamental methods of farming and fishing are similar among both populations is not surprising, as north Brazilian subsistence techniques are largely Indian-derived. But beyond that, the Tapajós-River Mundurucú live in single-house isolation and not in villages

Lf: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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as most of the population. These small one- or two-family groups do not have the social frame of reference necessary for the perpetuation of the native social system. And the social units are too small for the effective transmission of the traditional culture to the young.

Village life, relative isolation from Brazilians, greater population density, and, therefore, more intensive interaction with other Munduruců, make for better preservation of the Indian culture among the residents of the Cururú River. But here, too, tradition is on the wane, and the native social structure has been drastically modified.

Actually, the stronghold of Munduruců society and culture lies in the remaining savannah villages; and it is from the savannah area, once far more populous, that the contemporary dwellers of the Tapajós and Cururú rivers originally emigrated. It cannot be said that the Munduruců of the savannah villages represent the "aboriginal culture," for they too have been deeply affected and altered by Brazilian society. But change has been the least among this population. A greater degree of political and economic autonomy is preserved, and the native social system persists, although it has been subjected to modifications. Society and culture in the savannahs is certainly not the same as one hundred fifty or even fifty years ago, but it is still more distinctively Munduruců than in the Cururú villages and far more so than among the scattered Indians of the Tapajós River.

## THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The Planalto de Mato Grosso is a thinly forested and rugged upland, ranging in altitude from 2,000 to 3,000 feet, which forms the divide between the streams flowing north to the Amazon and south to the Paraguay River. The headwaters of the Madeira, Tapajós, Xingú, and Araguaya

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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while the lands lying north of the last rapids, the Cachoeira 191
do Maranhão, will be termed the "lower Tapajós"; this
division follows local usage. The traditional location of
their villages has been in a high and hilly area inland from [361]
the Tapajós, between the Cururú and Tropas rivers. This
is a region of mixed savannah and forest in which several
minor tributaries of the Tapajós have their headwaters.
Topographically, this high savannah land is a continua- 193
tion of the Serra do Cachimbo; it extends northwestward
through the Munduruçú country and across the Tapajós
at the Cachoeiras de Capoeira and Chacorão. Beyond this
point there is some savannah land at the headwaters of
the Secundurý and Abacaxis rivers, but the terrain soon
flattens out into the great, forested Amazon lowland en-
compassed by the Negro and Madeira rivers.

The savannahs in which the Munduruçú have long 193
dwelled are considered agreeable by Indians and Brazil- 361
ians alike, although the latter do not live in the area. The
villages are usually situated on high, grassy knolls, and
some offer vistas of twenty miles across forests and open
country, low hills, and valleys. The local streams are small,
but the water is cool and pure. And the forests are far
richer in game than in the more heavily settled areas of
the Amazon.

The climate of the upper Tapajós follows a more pro- 192
nounced wet-and-dry cycle than that of the Amazon valley
proper. The rains begin in mid-September and increase in
frequency and intensity for the next three months. The
heaviest rains fall between January and March; then they
gradually slacken until the dry season commences in June.
The great extremes between wet and dry seasons can be
seen from the following figures on average January and
July rainfall, collected by the Cururú Mission. During
1945–1951, the average January rainfall was 420.6 milli-

[Text continues on page 15]

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102
103
191
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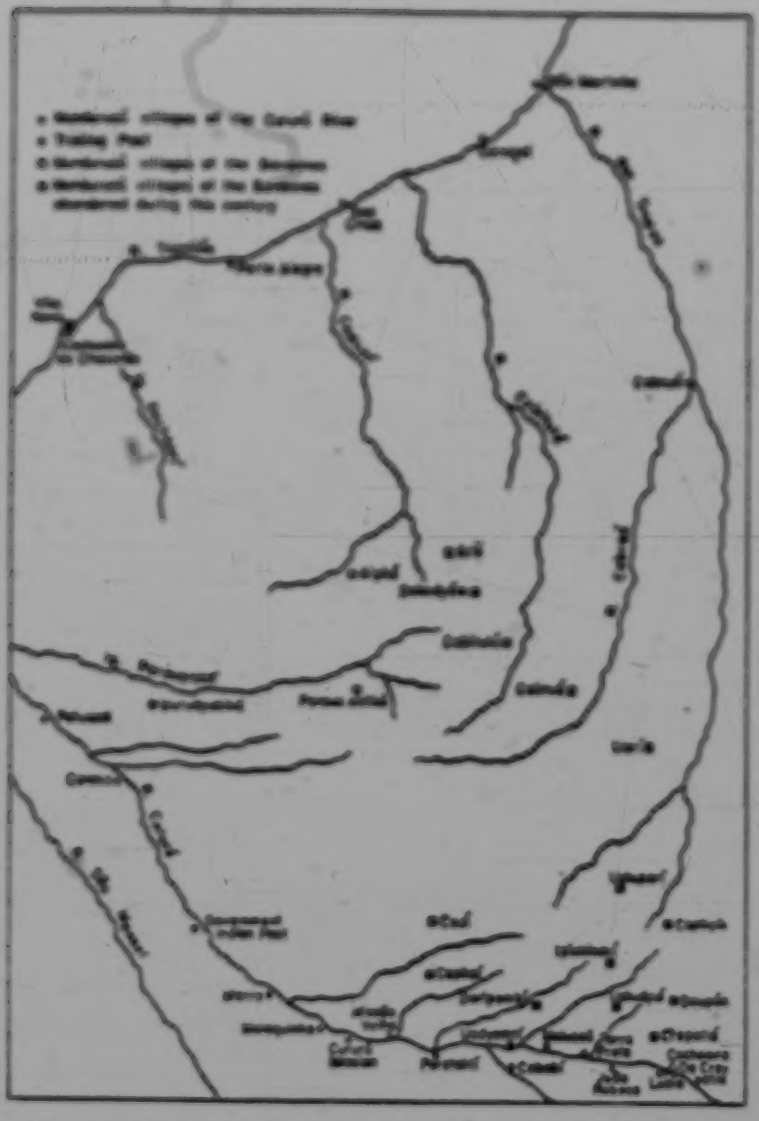
366



*Map 2. Present territory of the Mundurucú Indians*

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12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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nicipio of the same name which encompasses the upper Tapajós, ascend the stream in a trader's launch to take a prisoner into custody. Medical facilities, either public or private, are almost nonexistent. A dentist from Santarém visits the population annually and pulls teeth for a fee, but medical doctors are unknown south of the rapids. There is a hospital at Fordlandia, the old Ford Motor Company rubber plantation—which is now a Brazilian agricultural experimental station—but the trip is too far and costly for most sick persons. Schools are totally absent. Inhabitants who read and write usually learned to do so in another area or through literate parents. Actually, the Mundurucú are in a better position than their Brazilian neighbors, because both the Franciscan mission and the Indian Service post on the Cururú River offer limited medical and educational facilities to them.

One of the most striking features of the life of the Tapajós River inhabitants is their isolation. The typical habitation in this vast riparian region is the isolated wattle and daub hut built either on a platform, as on the lower Amazon, or, more commonly, on a somewhat higher section of a river bank beyond the reach of the annual floods. These isolated huts are scattered along the banks of the major streams and on their affluents. On the larger rivers, often at the mouths of the subsidiary streams, are the *barracões* (stores) of the *patrões* (patrons), the local traders, who buy the produce of the caboclo and sell him needed items and occasional luxuries, such as an alarm clock or a guitar. There are usually three to six houses adjacent to the store and house of the patron, all in the same forest clearing on the river bank. Some of these are the houses of rubber tappers whose rubber avenues are nearby, and others belong to people who live there during the rainy season when no rubber can be collected. Most

12:Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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customers of the patron remain in their isolated dwellings the year round.

Every rubber collector deals steadily with the same patron, because the latter controls the section of forest land in which his clients work. The trader usually has no legal title, but receives rights of exploitation by paying the state tax on the gross cash return from the land. The right of exploitation, perpetuated by the state tax, usually rests on a nebulous title, and, according to Wagley, it is "control over the land, and not legal documents" which establishes ownership in the Amazon.[8] The patron grants permission to the rubber tapper to extract rubber from his lands and, in return, exerts a trade monopoly in which his client sells rubber to him and buys goods from him. The patron profits from both sale and purchase and, since he passes the state tax on to the rubber collector, the latter receives but small return in terms of the prices prevailing in the urban markets. The client has freedom of movement only when he is not in debt to the patron, which rarely happens. If he owes money, he can transfer to another patron only if the new one settles the debt and transfers it to his own books. The rubber collector sometimes deals with the *regatões*, or itinerant merchants who ply the rivers, but these transactions are infrequent and in small amounts because the patron does not tolerate a substantial loss of commerce. The rubber collector who deals too often with the *regatão* might be denied credit by his regular patron or, less frequently, evicted from his avenue.

The economic power of the trader is especially strong on the upper Tapajós River because of a combination of geographic and economic factors. The lower Tapajós, from its mouth at Santarém to the first rapids 150 miles upstream, is economically diversified, and its rubber pro-

[8] Wagley, 1953, p. 92.

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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Sundays when the people come to trade and to enjoy social contacts. The patron is also expected to intervene in cases of serious violation of the law, and he is frequently called upon to settle disputes among his clients. The latter depend heavily on the traditional mutual obligations between patron and client. If the rubber collector falls ill and cannot work, the patron is expected to continue to extend credit to him so that his family may subsist. The patron is also supposed to offer food and coffee when his client visits and to show generosity to the latter's children, even if he is not their godfather. In turn, the client is expected to produce as much rubber as possible and to be loyal to his patron. But it is, at best, a very loosely knit community, for membership shifts frequently and the daily life of the people is carried on in one- or two-family isolation. The most important factor holding the community together is trade with the same patron.

This paucity of social interaction and the loose cohesion of the community is generally caused by the extraction economy prevailing in Amazonia and especially by the collection of wild rubber. The wild rubber trees exploited in the Amazon are scattered along the streams and are usually found on land flooded during the rainy season. Access to the trees is along paths that wind through the forest from one tree to another. The average rubber gatherer has one to three such "avenues" that he visits in rotation every third day to make a fresh cut in the bark of the tree and, later in the same day, to collect the latex that has accumulated in a metal cup placed below the incision. The trees are so widely distributed, except in the richest areas, that he usually works from dawn to late afternoon just to tap one avenue. The great area necessarily exploited by each rubber tapper, plus the fact that large riverine areas are found with few rubber trees and are thus unoccupied,

12:Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13



makes a dispersed settlement pattern necessary. Transportation in the region is only by canoe, and this, combined with the long work day, necessitates the placement of the house near the rubber avenue. The result is an average distance between houses of one mile, longer intervening stretches occurring in districts poor in rubber and thus submarginal in today's market.

The rubber tapper's work is not finished when he returns to his house, for he still must smoke and thereby cure and congeal the liquid latex. This process usually occupies about three hours, but if his yield is great, it can take up to five hours. Since his poverty is such that he can afford to buy only certain staple foodstuffs, he is often forced to fish until late in the night after he has smoked his rubber. The small amount of game eaten is usually killed by him during his rounds of the rubber trees. The only other important subsistence activity, slash-and-burn agriculture, is not often practiced by the rubber cutter because good land within a feasible distance of his house is rare, because the patron, to whom he usually is indebted requires extra services in addition to a maximum production of rubber, and because he is resigned in apathy to his hopeless situation. Under these circumstances of great distance from his neighbors and preoccupation with a barter economy requiring complete individualization of production, the bonds of economic coöperation and interdependency are weak within the local community. The caboclo has no recourse because he is usually held in debt servitude to the trader, and because the region, in its present state of economic development, offers few alternatives. This, then, is the milieu into which the remaining Mundurucú are being progressively drawn and into which many of their forebears have already been assimilated.

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tentions of the Mundurucú had already shifted to the Arara Indians, with similar results. In addition to their activity in quelling hostile Indians, the Mundurucú also assisted the Portuguese authorities in the revolution of the Cabanas in 1835–1836. This aid consisted mainly of mop-up operations conducted against the rebels after the strength of the revolt was broken.

With friendly and mutually profitable relations established through coöperation in warfare and continued within the framework of a social and economic system relating Mundurucú and Brazilians through trade, the tribesmen who moved to the Madeira and lower Tapajós became progressively assimilated into Amazonian society. In the latter region, Mundurucú society was losing its boundaries and cohesiveness by the middle of the nineteenth century. Bates reported that in 1852 the Mundurucú living on the Cuparí River, an affluent of the lower Tapajós, had recently abandoned village life and were scattered for six or seven miles along the river in twenty to thirty houses.[16] Most of these houses were of the Brazilian type or transitional to it. Few people were tattooed, all were clothed, and some spoke Portuguese in addition to their native Mundurucú. The Indians were under the control of Brazilian "captains of workers" on the lower Tapajós. Ostensibly, the duty of the latter was to supply crews for trading boats, but the Indians were also exploited by the captains for their own profit. Mundurucú society was becoming fragmented throughout the lower Tapajós region, for Bates reported the Santa Cruz mission to contain only thirty to forty families in 1852,[17] and by about 1880 it was a caboclo village. Similarly, Coudreau states that the population decline in the mission village of Uxituba, near modern Itaituba, was as follows: 1833, 485 Mundurucú; 1848, 343;

[16] *Ibid.*, 1863, p. 240.
[17] *Ibid.*, p. 225.

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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175 797 little progress was made in attracting the Indians to the mission. The priests made the rounds of the villages preaching and baptizing, and children were recruited for the school, but such contacts were sporadic.

175 439 797 In the late 1920's, the world price of rubber rose somewhat as a result of export restrictions imposed on the planters of British Malaya, and the attraction of higher returns caused the Indians to become more engaged in trade. This meant, of course, that more Indians came into contact with the mission in its new role as a trading post. The regatões still offered competition, but the Mundurucú, who knew nothing of weights and prices, nonetheless learned that they received a greater return for their rubber and manioc flour from the missionaries. They came to tap rubber in increasing numbers along the Cururú, and many left the savannah villages for all-year residence on its shores. By the 1930's, permanent villages began to grow up on the river banks. This population shift proceeded so rapidly that by 1950 there were only about 360 Mundurucú left on the savannahs, whereas the Cururú population numbered 700.

[361] [166] [162]

175 439 657 Of less importance in attracting a permanent population to the Cururú was the founding on that river of the Mundurucú post of the Brazilian Indian Protection Service in 1941. This post followed the establishment of an Indian reservation in 1939 that included most of the country lying inland from the Tapajós and bounded by the Cururú and Tropas rivers. Traders were barred from the reservation but since no inspection points were set up on the Tropas, Cabitutú, and Cadirirí rivers, the Tapajós River patrons and some regatões were still able to visit the savannahs. However, the Cururú, where the bulk of the Mundurucú population now lives, was effectively closed

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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to outside commerce, and a trade monopoly is now held by the mission and the post.

The population shift to the Cururú has had profound effects on Mundurucú society. Before 1930 there were fifteen villages in the interior region between the Tropas and the Cururú. Today there are only seven, for the eight villages nearest to the Cururú were abandoned after their populations had been steadily drained to the banks of the river. On the Cururú, there are no traditional villages. There is no men's house, and the architecture is local Brazilian. Six of the seven remaining savannah villages maintain the men's house and a modified form of the native dwelling.

Except for the village of Cauí, established in the 1930's by a few conservative Indians dissatisfied with life on the Cururú, all contemporary savannah villages are two to three days' march from the shores of the Cururú. The contact between the two populations is diminishing; they trade in different places, their way of life has become differentiated, and they feel themselves to be different. The Cururú River people ridicule the *campineiro*, the Brazilian term for a dweller of the savannahs, because "he has no clothes," "he is lazy," "his houses are dirty," and "he sleeps with a fire under his hammock at night." Actually, such ridicule reflects a sense of inferiority among the Cururú-River Mundurucú, because they at the same time respect the campineiro for his greater knowledge of the traditional culture, his supposedly still-existent warlike proclivities, and the fear that he may be a powerful sorcerer. The missionaries have inspired many of the stereotypes of the campineiro as an uncouth backwoodsman in order to persuade the people to abandon their native practices and accept missionary instruction. The campineiro, on the other

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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# 3

# *economic life*

Until about 1925, the bulk of the Mundurucú population of the Tapajós area lived in the region of mixed savannah and gallery forest that begins some twenty to thirty miles east of the upper Tapajós River. The population of about 360 living in seven villages in this area today is constantly diminishing. The villages and their approximate populations are: Arö, 90; Cabitutú, 45; Cabruá, 67; Aipka, 50; Dekodyem, 50; Cauí, 25; and Parawaröktiká, 30. The last-named village is in the traditional savannah area and has some antiquity, but in recent years the organization of village life has shifted to the characteristic pattern of the Cururú River. Cauí was established in recent times by conservative Mundurucú who became dissatisfied with their new way of life on the Cururú River and wished to revert to more traditional practice. How-

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ever, the people of the village still maintain trade relations and their closest social contacts with the Cururú River settlements.

The other five communities are those which before the migration to the Cururú were farthest removed from its shores. A glance at the map will show that communication by water with the dwellers of that river is not feasible, and a two or three days' march would be necessary by land. Thus, geographical removal has combined with the social gulf that has arisen between campineiros and Cururú residents to make contact between the two groups most sporadic.

### THE SAVANNAH VILLAGES

Most of the research in the savannahs was done in the village of Cabruá. The choice was made primarily for physiological and nonscholarly reasons; it had the least insects and the most food of all the villages. A vacant house was also available and ready to be occupied. Beyond considerations of creature comfort, Cabruá was suitable because it had the second largest population, several excellent old informants in residence, and it was a typical community of the more traditional type. Its five houses were arranged in the customary circle around a central plaza, and its male population lived in the traditional men's house. My wife and I accordingly settled in Cabruá during the second half of our Mundurucú sojourn.

The Mundurucú are essentially forest dwellers. Although their villages are on high savannahs, they depend on the resources of the forests and rivers for their subsistence. Their ecological adaptation does not differ greatly from that of other tropical forest tribes except in varying emphasis on different pursuits. Hunting, fishing, gathering, and gardening were and still are the basis of Mun-

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226 streams rely primarily upon fish for protein. The savannah villages are several hours inland from the nearest navi-
[361] gable streams. This settlement pattern was well adapted to the defensive requirements of a warrior society, but it removed the communities from the best fishing sites. The narrow, shallow streams within easy reach of the villages yield only smaller species of fish and in limited quantities.

177 The Mundurucú relied little on the river system for
501 food or transportation in times past, as is shown by the fact that only in recent years has the dugout canoe been adopted on even a small scale. The modern Mundurucú canoe is usually of the double ended plank type made by the Brazilians and sold to the Indians by the rubber traders; before contact with the whites the only water craft used was the bark canoe. Not even this canoe, however, was native to the Mundurucú for they acknowledge having acquired it from their Tupian-speaking neighbors, the Apiacá. In early times, the bark canoe was used only to cross large streams when the Indians were on war expeditions. Small streams were crossed either on fallen logs or by swimming. Today, canoes are in greater use, but very few are owned among the Mundurucú of the savannahs, despite their annual dry-season residence on large streams. Only two men in the village of Cabruá owned canoes and no one in Cabitutú had one.

226 An additional factor limiting fishing is that the annual
[132] rains cause the rivers to overflow their banks, allowing the fish to disperse through the flooded forest where they feed on fallen berries and fruits. During this season, fishing is difficult in the rain-forest region, even for people having canoes. For the Mundurucú, who have to fish with bow and arrow from the river banks, it is almost impossible. The modern residents of Cabruá say that their lack of canoes would make it necessary for them during

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241 311 themselves and yield for several years in abandoned gardens. Other plants, such as timbó and some fruit trees are also productive long after the garden goes out of regular cultivation. The reason for planting a field only twice is obvious when one considers that bitter manioc matures in about eight months on the first planting and in more than a year on the second in the already "tired" soil. A third planting would yield little and, also, as the local Brazilians say, "the jungle takes over by that time." Fortunately, there is adequate virgin forest or old second-growth forest available to meet the needs of the population, and they simply clear new gardens. The usual system is for each man to clear land annually and thus have one garden in first planting and another in the second planting. But men often feel that they have adequate crops and let a year pass without clearing forest; this is especially common if a housemate has a new garden.

[423] The rapid exhaustion of the soil and the plentifulness of forest land explains the absence of concepts of private or corporate property in land among the Mundurucú. When the best forest soils within a convenient range are exhausted, the village moves a short distance to the proximity of fresh soil. But the Mundurucú build new villages every ten years whether nearby garden land is scarce or not, and the present depleted population may shift within a one-mile radius over a forty- to fifty-year period. When conveniently situated forest is exhausted, they merely move out of this orbit to a new locale a few miles away, near which they remain for another long period. Villages probably moved somewhat longer distances in time past, when their populations exceeded two hundred people and pressure on the land was correspondingly greater.

[361] [166]

423 The same causes that operate to make individual property in land meaningless apply on the family and village

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# 5

# *the local group*

The village is the locus of economic and social life among the Mundurucú of the savannahs. Remoteness from larger streams makes these communities rather isolated in today's economic and social setting, but their positions on open, grass-covered hills fitted them ideally for purposes of defense in earlier times. The men still prefer savannah life because insects are lacking and the country is considered beautiful. But of greater importance, it is strongly felt that the proper place for a "true" Mundurucú village is in this locale. As will be shown in the next chapter, the conditions of migration have imposed overwhelming economic and social obstacles to the transplanting of traditional Mundurucú communities to the banks of the Cururú River and other larger streams, but these inhibiting factors have been supported by the deep conviction

361 • [621]

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361 [186] that the only proper place for "people" is in the savannah. Residence beyond this heartland is tantamount to becoming a pariwat, or "outlander."

### THE VILLAGE

342 [361] Each village contains two to five dwelling houses and the men's house, or *eksá*. The former have rectangular ground-plans of about 20 by 40 feet in dimension and are internally uncompartmented. The walls are made of the bark of the *tauarí* tree and extend to approximately two feet from the roof. The intervening space is either left vacant or loosely covered with palm fronds to allow ventilation. The roofs are steeply pitched and made of thatch placed over a pole framework. This architecture represents a departure from the traditional type. Until recent times, houses had roughly elliptical ground plans; structures of 80 to 100 feet in length are said to have been common in the more populous past.

361 345 The houses are arranged in a circle around a central plaza that is now underbrush and weed-infested. The men's house is always located on the west side of the village perimeter, and faces east into the plaza. It is totally unlike the dwellings in design and construction. Made in the form of an open-sided lean-to, it consists only of a roof that rises from the ground on the west side to a height of about 15 feet, and is supported by posts at the middle and both sides at four points along its length. Men's houses of twenty to thirty years ago were said to measure some 100 feet in length, but that of the contemporary village of Cabruá is only 50 feet long and 30 wide.

361 487 Modern Cabruá is typical of the savannah communities, except for certain situational factors of population and immediate environment. It is accessible from the Tapajós River by either the Cabitutú or Tropas rivers; the former

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is usually used, because it is navigable to a point only five hours from the village. From the Cabitutú River port of Cabruá which consists of a house and clearing on the river bank, the path to the village winds through a belt of gallery forest of several miles depth. After crossing a few minor streams that flow into the Cabitutú, the path emerges into an open savannah and gently climbs for about three miles until the crest of the height of land between the Cabruá and Cabitutú rivers is reached. Cabruá is at this point surrounded by a belt of underbrush and low trees that have grown from cast-off seeds and have been fertilized by human waste.

Three hundred yards away at the base of the hill on which the village is built is a small stream and a strip of bordering gallery forest only two hundred yards wide. The stream rises from springs a few miles away and its waters are clear, pure, and cool. People draw their water here, wash clothes, and bathe—the Mundurucú are personally very clean and perform their ablutions at least twice daily.

The village is in open country, but large expanses of deep, virgin forest are nearby. Paths radiate outward in all directions from the village, leading to the stream, the port, other villages, and to the forest. The forest itself is criss-crossed with trails used for hunting; others lead to the gardens. The latter are generally no more than 45 minutes walk from the village. This is considered a rather long trip, because the women must carry their harvest in burden baskets back to the village. Land is not unlimited in the environs of Cabruá; stretches of forest are subject to minor inundation in the rainy season, and large areas are sandy and horticulturally worthless savannah. The village, then, must be moved at long intervals. Since contemporary Cabruá has only 67 inhabitants, there is no great pressure on land. Houses age and fall into disrepair rapidly, how-

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ever, and the village plaza and the surrounding underbrush become dense and the lair of snakes and scorpions. As a result of this rapid decay, a new village is built every ten years, but, since the people live in the old one while building the new, it is usually constructed nearby. The remains of four old villages, representing about forty years of occupation, can be discerned within a half mile of the present location of Cabruá. Gradual exhaustion of the more favored forest lands and the necessity of walking ever farther to the gardens eventually forces a move to the vicinity of fertile soil. Accordingly, the people of Cabruá decided during our stay to build a village on a site some two miles away, and they planned to start construction during the following rainy season.

The village of Cabruá and its households have suffered greatly from depopulation because of disease and emigration. Although many of its residents had not made definite plans, at the time of our departure the new village probably would have had no more than three households, for several people were considering migration to the Tropas and Cabitutú rivers. At its site in 1953, Cabruá had five dwelling houses. One was deserted, for the previous inhabitant had lost a son through an accident, and this was interpreted by the shamans to be the result of the family's inattention to their ritual duty to the sacred trumpets. The family left for another village before the trumpet spirits could exact further revenge.

The household of the chief included 17 people, and the largest house unit of the village had a population of 26. The other two houses of the village numbered 8 and 16 people. These groups constituted matrilocally-based extended families, although the continual flux and constant loss of population in recent times has disturbed this organization.

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the Tropas, but some do business with the trader of São Martinho, on the Tapajós. The people of Cabruá live in three separate hamlets on the Tropas. At one, the most powerful shaman of the village lives with two younger men of his household, and another is occupied by another man of the same house and his son-in-law. These two men trade on behalf of their rubber-avenue co-residents, and the chief of Cabruá is not considered to be their representative in trade. The Cabitutú River has only one or two all-year residents, and these are Brazilian. A number of families of Brazilians and eight Mundurucú families maintain regular homes on the Tropas, however. The latter Mundurucú associate to a varying extent with the villagers during the rubber season and occasionally come to Cabruá to seek the services of a shaman or simply to visit, but they remain marginal to village life.

The Mundurucú of the savannah communities collect less rubber than those of the Cururú and far less than the Brazilian tappers. The latter generally commence production as soon as the flood recedes in May or early June and collect until the rains and rising waters make their rubber avenues inaccessible in November or December. The efforts of the campineiros, however, are limited by their alternating residence between village and rubber-avenue dwelling. The residents of Cabruá have to clear land for gardens before they may depart, and this generally holds them until May. But only the more industrious Mundurucú leave at this time; many linger in the village until June or July, and in 1952 one man stayed until August. Rubber is collected until August, at which time the trees lose their leaves, and the yield drops off sharply for two to three weeks. Some Indians use this occasion to return to the village to burn the felled vegetation in their garden sites and then return to the rubber avenue until

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planting time a few weeks later; most, however, stay in the village. The average collecting season of the savannah Mundurucú thus lasts about two and a half to three months out of a possible period of six months.

The dwellings in which the collecting season is passed frequently consist only of a roof set on four or six upright posts, but others are larger and have walls of mud or palm leaves. Cooking is generally done in a shed connected to the rear of the house, in imitation of the typical north Brazilian kitchen. The rubber-avenue dwellings often house but one nuclear family, but if a larger group resides in the same house, all members of the nuclear family hang their hammocks adjacent to one another.

There is no firm rule dictating the composition of the membership of rubber-avenue dwellings. Residents of the same household tend to cling together during the dry season, but the limited number of rubber avenues accessible from one dwelling break up the larger extended families. In such cases, closer kinsmen within a household remain together. The availability of rubber avenues, in general, makes any strict rule of dry-season residence impracticable. They are limited in number, and a young man embarking on independent rubber collection must reside where an avenue is vacant.

The average Brazilian collector spends five or six days a week in his rubber avenue, but the campineiro rarely works more than four. And while a single Brazilian may have up to three separate avenues, working each on different days, no campineiro has more than one. Indisposition to intensive labor in rubber production thus combines with the maintenance of savannah-village residence to keep Mundurucú productivity low. The Indian collector leaves the house for his avenue early in the morning and generally returns by mid-afternoon. Besides his knife for

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especially the old, cling tenaciously to residence there. In times long past, the alternatives to village life were privation and death at the hands of enemy war parties; the village was the basic unit in economy and defense and was fundamental to the workings of the social organization.

The pacification of the Tapajós River region, and the rubber trade, have presented the opportunity for an alternate mode of residence along the banks of larger streams. That it offers certain attractions is manifest from the fact that almost three-quarters of the surviving Mundurucú of the area have elected it. But the 360 people who still reside in the savannahs pursue a way of life which is distinctively Mundurucú. It is a changed culture, a changed social structure, but it is genetically rooted in the Mundurucú past. Life in these savannah villages obviously exerts a considerable hold over its members, for the communities have been persisting despite more than a century and a half of contact with Brazilian society and a constant population drain through emigration and epidemic disease. Some of the principal bases of this cohesion lie in the social means by which Mundurucú technology is implemented, for these provide fundamental ties of personal and familial interdependence.

The keynote of this organization lies in coöperation in production, and collectivism in consumption. Men depend on coöperation in hunting to bring game to bay within short range of their bows and to concentrate their fire power. Women share the arduous chore of farinha making and increase their efficiency by a division of tasks. The efficiency gained is perhaps sacrificed to conviviality, but a dull and arduous job is nonetheless made more pleasant. The implements used in manioc processing are expensive and beyond the means of individuals, but the village buys

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182 439 villages of their populations comes from the outside. The quest of the Mundurucú for trade items and the equally intense effort of the traders to obtain increased rubber yields from their Indian customers has steadily drawn the latter deeper in the extraction industry. The limitations placed on their production by rainy-season residence in the savannah villages has, however, proved an obstacle to their expanding demand for trade articles. Many have overcome this block by the simple expedient of remaining in their rubber-avenue homes throughout the year and thus extending the period during which they tap rubber.

The internal factors that ease or make necessary such a move are thus complemented by the pull of trade. Emi- [166] gration is easy. The family already has a house at the rubber avenue which with some patching may make a suitable all-year residence. Many have producing gardens [241] which were originally made to provide food during the dry season, but which can serve equally well during the rains. Since these gardens are commonly in good, black soil, they are actually more desirable than those near the village.

182 166 • 361 621 Individual nuclear families sometimes move immediately from village life into isolated existence. This is, of course, almost always true of fugitive sorcerers. But the desire for sociability and economic coöperation commonly motivates the family to settle with or adjacent to other Mundurucú who preceded them in the migration. Or a small group of nuclear families that customarily resides together in the dry season may leave village life together. 182 476 621 These clusters of families help each other in hunting, gardening, and manioc processing, and they also pool their resources to buy a copper pan to toast farinha. Since they generally produce more rubber than they did as savannah residents, they also have the purchasing power to buy a

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canoe and firearms. Fishing is easier with watercraft and solitary hunting more effective by firearms. Both may be bought by the individualized labor of rubber production, and both further free the individual of his dependence on a larger group.

The net effect of the social processes currently affecting the Mundurucú is to scatter the population into semi-isolated and economically independent units. When the now middle-aged and old people die, the process will probably accelerate and the savannah villages will pass out of existence. The families will presumably settle, as all now do in the dry season and several throughout the year, on the waters of the Cadiriri, Cabitutú, and Tropas rivers. Those on the former two rivers will no doubt be customers of the post of Sae Cinza and the residents of the latter will be clients of the patrons of Caroçal and São Martinho. Trips to the trader's store and increased use of canoes will allow the residents of each river to maintain frequent relations with each other, but the long distances between the streams will propably inhibit similar communication between their inhabitants. Beyond the membership of the hamlets in which small groups of nuclear families congregate, the only more inclusive form of economic interdependences will be that between patron and client. This relationship will probably grow in importance, and the Indians will become more firmly integrated into the loose communities, typical of the Amazon, composed of the trader and his customers.

These predictions are not entirely conjectural, for the projected way of life is essentially that of the Mundurucú who have already migrated to the Tapajós River and its tributaries. The nature of the migration and the following life by the river prohibits the reconstitution of savannah-type villages.

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# 7

# *the mundurucú of the cururú river*

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The Cururú River was permanently settled by the Mundurucú in the 1920's and 1930's through much the same processes that are observable today along the Cadiriri, Cabitutú, and Tropas rivers. The people who moved to the Cururú came largely from the southernmost savannah communities, and they settled on this particular stream because their dry-season residences and commercial bonds were there. When people move from the more northerly, contemporary savannah communities today, their choices of particular streams are dictated by the same reasons. There is no other cause for the differential migration that has split the northern and southern villages than proximity to certain rivers and corresponding ties to

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particular patrons. Two or three decades ago, all savannah communities were much alike and, except for differing places of dry-season residence, the populations of all maintained frequent contact through intermarriage, visiting, and joint participation in ceremonies. The cultural and social differentiation of Cururú and savannah dweller is thus quite recent.

There are two major points of difference between the migration to the Cururú and that to the more northerly rivers. First, in the former large numbers of people moved in a comparatively short period. Secondly, the patrons on the Cururú River were not Brazilian rubber traders, but a group of German Catholic missionaries who were deliberately attempting to attract the population and modify their culture. The missionaries achieved little success during their first ten to fifteen years of activity and attracted large numbers of Indians only after the price of rubber rose. On the other hand, the astuteness of this example of applied anthropology should be given recognition, for the missionaries offered high rubber prices and low-cost merchandise, and thereby accelerated the migration process.

## THE NATURE OF THE MIGRATION

The population move to the Cururú occurred in piecemeal fashion, for, as in the contemporary savannahs, nuclear families or segments of extended families shifted and not whole villages. Co-resident groups of Indians who commonly collected rubber and fished on the banks of the Cururú during the dry season were lured into setting up permanent residences there by the attraction of trade goods and the persuasion of the missionaries, who sought thereby to bring the Indians more directly under their influence. Other rubber-season residents perceived the economic advantages of all-year occupation of the Cururú,

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and they too abandoned the annual return to the savannahs. The material prosperity of these emigrants lured more of their brethren into increased rubber collection, and greater numbers of Indians began to establish permanent residences on the river banks. There is little doubt that the same centrifugal tendencies that are currently operating in the remaining savannah communities did much to hasten the migration. In time, small villages were established on the Cururú River.

Those who tapped rubber on the Cururú tended, as the people of Cabruá today, to choose avenues near their close kinsmen and house mates. Unmarried sons worked with their fathers, and sons-in-law also had contiguous rubber trails; other relatives worked nearby if it was convenient. When these families shifted to permanent occupancy of the river shores, they maintained these affiliations and either lived in the same dwelling or built adjacent but separate houses. Other persons who had rubber avenues in the vicinity migrated later and chose to settle in these little hamlets. Although this might force them to walk for thirty or forty-five minutes to their daily labors, the presence of others afforded the opportunity to share in farinha-making equipment and, of greater importance, provided them with the companionship and social intercourse to which village life had accustomed them.

Other migrants to the Cururú settled in these villages also, but their rubber avenues were too far away to allow daily commuting, and they had to follow the familiar pattern of village residence in the rainy season and temporary habitation of the rubber avenue during the dry summer. This was no great inconvenience, because these dry-season houses were usually within a few hours of the village and were easily accessible by water. The benefits of water transportation could only be enjoyed if one had a canoe,

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of course, but that could be obtained in trade with the mission if one worked hard.

The villages grew by increments and with no special order. The original houses were of the sort that the Mundurucú usually erected in their rubber avenues. These had a square floor plan, and, when graced with walls, usually were made of straw or wattle and daub in the manner characteristic of those of the Brazilian rubber collectors. Later additions to the village followed this design and furthered the already drastic alteration of the traditional Mundurucú settlement by being built in any convenient space in the village clearing, with no reference to an over-all village plan. Today, the usual Mundurucú village on the Cururú consists of from three to eleven square wattle-and-daub houses having no special arrangement except that all face toward the river.

The circumstances of the migration induced other changes in village organization. Since the first permanent settlers on the Cururú came in small groups of one to three nuclear families, it was no longer possible to carry out the old coöperative economic organization; this is essentially the same problem faced by the contemporary campineiros during the rubber season. There were not enough men in any one place to carry on the almost daily collective hunts, but the proximity of the river and the stable food supply it offered compensated for this. Timbó-fishing trips still required a concentration of forces, but, since they occurred only periodically during the dry season, the gatherings could be arranged by sending invitations abroad. Everyday bow-and-arrow fishing required only two men, one to handle the canoe and the other to shoot the fish. If fishing was done from the banks, one man was adequate to the task. Thus, the new economic circumstances of their lives combined with the nature of the migration itself to decrease the dependency of the individual on a large group.

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## THE MUNDURUCÚ OF THE CURURÚ

178 182 345 [562] durucú village on the Cururú River has ever had the men's house. The male organization has meaning primarily in terms of the social and economic division of the sexes and in the maintenance of male solidarity and dominance. These have been drastically altered, and the men's house would have no function in the new social structure. Similarly, the ceremonies for the game-animal spirits have never been observed on the Cururú, because the major festivals were focused on the hunt and depended on the men's house for their proper completion. Also of importance has been the presence of the missionaries, who have consistently discouraged native religious ceremonies in the region under their influence.

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### THE RUBBER TRADE

182 361 184 When posed with the question of why he prefers residence on the Cururú to the savannahs, the male Mundurucú informant gives three reasons. First, that even in the rainy season one can catch enough fish in the Cururú River, while the campineiro may hunt to no avail for several days in succession. Second, that savannah life requires much walking, but that, on the Cururú, the canoe makes travel easier. The walks referred to are those long treks that the savannah dweller must make at the beginning and end of the rubber season, when his supply of farinha has to be replenished, or when work has to be done in the gardens. [439] Third, that on the Cururú trade goods are plentiful and accessible, and a better return is received from rubber.

439 648 The latter point is important, because the Mundurucú are aware of the sharp practices of the Brazilian traders, although they feel powerless to cope with them. "Not only does the patron give very little for rubber," say the Cururú River residents "but when asked for more expensive articles he always replies that he does not have any

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439 fathers are not separately dealt with, and the economic
648 importance of the nuclear family is thereby enhanced. As
797 soon as a young man reaches potential marriage age, however, he seeks out his own rubber avenue and thereafter trades on his own account. This can be contrasted to the savannahs where the young, unmarried men usually pool their production with that of their fathers.

182 The first rubber avenue worked by a youth is usually
361 an unoccupied one in the vicinity of that of his father, but
439 a shortage of available avenues nearby might cause him to seek farther afield. Upon marriage, the groom can settle near his father-in-law, according to the matrilocal rule,
[591] but lack of a convenient avenue might cause him to remain patrilocal or to seek a new residence altogether. In short, the tendency toward permanent residence near one's rubber avenue, the high importance that the rubber-extraction industry has in the lives of the people of the Cururú, and the fact that each man trades for himself, release the young men of dependence on an extended family
[596] head and contributed to the breakdown of the extended family and matrilocality on the Cururú. This complements
[476] the previously described loss of coöperative patterns in
[594] the subsistence economy, with corresponding enhancement of the role of the nuclear family.

439 Finally, the people of the Cururú are more heavily en-
461 gaged in the rubber trade than the campineiros. In contrast to the four days per week and three months per year that the latter spend in actual rubber production, the average Cururú rubber tapper works five days a week and four to five months a year. Also, many Indians on the Cururú exploit two or three avenues. The longer time spent in rubber collecting means that the Indian must return to the rubber trees after planting his garden. This is difficult for the campineiro, because the avenues are far from the vil-

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lages and easy transportation is lacking. But on the Cu- 439
rurú, even the man who has a separate dry-season resi- 461
dence has direct access to his village by canoe.

### THE CURURÚ VILLAGE

The Mundurucú population of the Cururú River has for 162
several years maintained an average figure of 700. This in- 361
cludes 200 Indians with permanent residences at the mis-
sion and 70 to 80 who live at the Indian post. Part of these [221]
latter two groups spread out every summer to collect rub-
ber while the others work for the two agencies as garden-
ers, general workmen, fishermen, and crew members on
the launches. The post and mission Mundurucú settle-
ments are in no way autonomous villages, and all general
economic and political direction is provided by the Indian
agent and the priests.

The rest of the population is principally distributed in eleven settlements ranging in size from hamlets of two or three houses with populations of 20 to 25 people to the largest settlement, Missão Velha,[1] with eleven houses and 90 inhabitants. In addition there are many scattered dwellings along the banks which are the all-year residences of one or two nuclear families. In 1942 there were only about seven villages on the Cururú and practically no isolated dwellings, although the population then was substantially the same. The increase in number of villages and of families living in isolation is the result of a fission process in which segments of villages split away to form new communities. The Cururú River settlements are in this sense more unstable than the contemporary savannah communities. Thus, the average population of the five traditional savannah villages, excluding Parawaröktiká, which has no

[1] Old Mission. So named because it is near the site of the first mission, abandoned in 1921.

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men's house, and the newly formed Cauí, is 60. On the other hand, the average Cururú River community, excluding the mission and Indian-post settlements, numbers less than 40 people. The Cururú settlements have few of the cohesive aspects of the savannah villages, but are afflicted with the cultural inheritance of many of their divisive tendencies. This can be illustrated by briefly presenting the community organization in one Cururú village.

Its eleven houses and 90 people make Missão Velha the largest village on the Cururú River. The village suffers from the same disadvantages that made it necessary to move the mission from the area. It is set back about a half mile north of the river bank because the river here is bordered by a stretch of savannah that is inundated annually. There is a clear stream about ten minutes walk to the east, but the annual flooding makes it inaccessible in the rainy season and water must be taken from the intervening flooded forest. To the north, behind the village, is a region of low savannah interspersed with stretches of forest. There is a limited amount of land suitable for horticulture, and, after seventeen years of occupation of the village, nearby land is already scarce. An additional disadvantage of Missão Velha is the presence of the usual quota of insects that infest the Cururú, which make the relatively insect-free savannah villages more agreeable.

Missão Velha, like most of the other riverine villages, grew up without planning of internal arrangement or location except for proximity to rubber avenues. All but one of its eleven houses have wattle-and-daub walls in the Brazilian fashion. The exception has walls made of vertical wooden laths, also a Brazilian mode of building. One house has the high, steep roof and rounded ends of the aboriginal dwelling, although its walls are of mud. The cook sheds adjoining the rear entrance or the side of each house are a distinctively Brazilian trait.

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13



a distinctively Brazilian trait. The village site is a well-weeded, long, rectangular clearing throughout which the houses are scattered. On the periphery of the clearing are the latex-smoking sheds of the men who are able to use the village as a base of rubber-tapping operations. Paths radiate outward from the village in the direction of the port on the Cururú River, the watering place, the gardens, and the rubber avenues. One little-used path goes beyond to connect with the network of trails which interconnect the savannah villages. Today, this is one of the two remaining trails linking that region with the Cururú.

The size of the average savannah household is but a shadow of former days, but it is still much larger than that of the Cururú. Of the ten occupied houses in Missão Velha, six contain but one nuclear family each, two houses are the residences of groups composed of two families, and two houses have three nuclear families each. Co-residence is based on kinship in the multifamily dwellings, but relationship is just as often in the male line as in the female. Significantly, in all cases of joint residence, each nuclear family occupies a definite section of the house, which is partitioned off by a wattle-and-daub wall.

Although co-residence implies kinship, the converse does not hold true in Missão Velha. Several villagers were related by close ties of consanguinity but maintained separate dwellings. Such kinsmen, however, frequently joined forces in clearing and planting gardens. Except for these joint efforts which are not an invariable rule and which never include more than two or three nuclear families, the household is the basic economic unit. The division of labor in this village and on the Cururú, in general, is in marked contrast to the savannahs, for not only is the average household composed of a smaller number of families, but there is little coöperation between the houses.

/2 cont./

*241 174 mythological and legendary traditions of the Mundurukú lead us to believe that they were not always a people given to the cultivation of plants. This, however, /applies to/ a remote past, which is no longer verifiable nowadays. In historic times, ever since they came *241 175 into contact with civilized people and came to be known, they have [269] been observed to cultivate gardens and to make manioc flour. It is [721] true that the Mundurukú gained greater fame as warriors, for whenever the opportunity arose they did not hesitate to attack even cities such as Santarém (1780) and Gurupá (1784). (1)

1. Horton, 1948: 272-273.

As colonial rule was strengthened, however, and warring activities decreased, these Indians seem to have tended increasingly toward a more stable way of life and a more extensive and more diversified agriculture. I believe that available texts must be interpreted in this light. Even though they are not all in agreement, the traveling writers provide glimpses of a development in the cultivation methods of these Indians.

*24 [361] Martius, speaking in a general way of the Tupi tribes of the upper Tapajós, including the Mundurukú, regards them, precisely because of this incipient agriculture, as seminomadic. He says: "They practice a primitive agriculture and, therefore, they are not nomads in the strict sense of the term; their villages, however, do not remain immutably in the same place." (2) Monteiro Baena

2. "Sie treiben einen nothduerftigen Landbau, sind daher im strengeren Sinne keine Nomaden; doch bleiben ihre Niederlassungen nicht unveraenderlich an derselben Stelle." Martius, 1867: 201.

[175] testifies that at first, in the years following the pacification of the Mundurukú, their propensity for agriculture was not very great or very strong. Referring to the "Mundrucús" forcefully brought to and

/8 cont./

*241 [804] or if other relatives have come to live in the house, then the plot is made larger. The calculation is thus basically intuitive, even though it is based on practical experience gathered through generations.

*241 177 [437] Nowadays, the Indian usually plants a little more than he needs for his own use, to obtain a surplus (along with the surplus of rubber he has gathered) and improve his lot by using it in the purchase of clothes, nets, machetes, etc. The garden, therefore, helps him to maintain his economic balance at his present stage of acculturation.

[242] Another factor which also depends in part on the terrain is the shape of the plot. Here, however, other elements are already in evidence, especially the influence of neo-Brazilian acculturation. Whenever possible, the Mundurukú prefer the traditional shape, which is rounded or elliptic-oval. Thus did the ancestors make their plots, and thus they are made to this day in the villages of the interior. Still in 1957, this garden shape could easily be distinguished when flying over the villages of the Kabitutu and Pararokti. But this is no longer an iron rule. "It depends on the terrain," they told me. But I believe that the influence of the peasants is stronger than that of the terrain. Thus we find gardens of various shapes, elongated, rectangular, and even square. The latter predominate especially in [361] the Cururú and Tapajós regions and thus in areas where the Mundurukú no longer live in village communities but in isolated dwellings. The [182] dismembering of the community and the emancipation of the Mundurukú family from the village system are reflected here as they are in many other aspects of the culture.

*241 3. Clearing— tyut tatabm. To clear is to cut down the undergrowth with the machete, removing from the site of the future garden shrubs, young trees, and brush. This is done to prepare for the next task, which is the felling of the trees. In this way, the woodcutters have greater freedom of action. After the trees are felled, it would be impossible to clear the ground of undergrowth. As a rule, the clearing is done in three days' work, and some time is allowed to elapse for the brushwood to dry.

/16 cont./

*241 177 [171] of sweet manioc, even though, in many respects, their agricultural system is quite similar to that of the Mundurukú.

The first great influence of civilization unquestionably occurred during the nineteenth century, following the pacification of the [361] Mundurukú, when they settled on the margins of the Tapajós. Through this contact, nearly all the plants cultivated on the lower Amazon became known to the Mundurukú and were, for the most part, adopted [797] by them. The old mission of Bacabal must also have had some influence on this development. The new agricultural acquistions, as well as their handling and usage, spread rapidly along the Tapajós, but very slowly toward the interior and especially toward the grass- 262 lands of Mundurucânia. The knowledge and use of manioc flour ex- 177 emplifies this process. In the old days, the Mundurukú were not familiar with manioc flour and made only tapioca cakes. Nowadays, even in the villages of the interior, they all make flour. But, as I said, manioc flour is a relatively recent acquisition. My informant Tomé told me the following: "My grandmother told me, one day, that in her childhood, in the villages (of the interior), they did not [252] know yet how to make flour. They only made tapioca cakes, which sometimes they even roasted on stone (slabs)...." This was at the most 80 years ago. The Mundurukú of the Tapajós, on the other hand, being far more exposed to contact with civilization than the Mundurukú of the central grasslands, were already quite familiar with manioc flour in those days and even prepared it for commercial pur- [439] poses. Martius, Bates, and others, as we already indicated at the beginning of this work, speak of the important flour production and of the flour trading which the Mundurukú of the Tapajós carried on with the traders of Santarém and of the lower Amazon. It seems 241 obvious, therefore, that the spread of agricultural elements into the 177 Tapajós region occurred /17/ at a rather uneven rate, and that in the case cited, in the villages of the interior, the making of manioc flour was acquired much later than in the villages of the Tapajós River. If this happened in connection with the mere usage of a plant

/26 cont./

*241 602 431 are closely united, or when, owing to some reverse, one of the family members cannot prepare his own garden but can help in the preparation of that of his father, brother, son, etc. then, sometimes, a communal plot is prepared. This refers, however, to the concept of "garden" in its absolute sense: a garden of bitter manioc, of tubercles. For they always continue to plant their own bananas, pepper, etc., separately, for their own private use, each family for itself. This type of "communal garden" is found also (or exclusively?) /27/ outside the old community, among the acculturated Mundurukú. I observed such a case, between father and son, in the mission itself, where everyone has his own home. Both parties have equal right to the use of the garden. This type of "communal garden" is quite similar to that known among the peasants as a "company garden." The difference between the two types might perhaps be defined as follows: the "communal garden" serves directly for the use and sustenance of the families involved; the "company garden" exists on a contract basis, and its foundations and goals are usually commercial.

423 428 Once there is property, there arises the problem of inheritance. Each garden has its owner, with all ownership rights. In case of death, the plot passes into the hands of the eldest son, who is, however, nothing more than the "administrator" of this inheritance with a share in the usufruct. The heir is the family, represented by the eldest son in the sense that he must look after the plot, which the family shares along with him. When there is no family, the brothers inherit the plot. If there are no brothers, the other relatives do. In any case, the garden is not allowed to go to waste, and its produce is always utilized.

3. Garden and group: intraterritorial migrations

*241 361 At first sight, the Mundurukú gardens often seem to lie far from the house or village. And, in fact, this is frequently the case. But this is nearly always the result of long years of permanence in one and the same spot. As time goes by, the soil around the houses becomes weak and exhausted. (15)[134] It is for this reason that the Indian

7A [See category 116, p. 32 for explanation of this footnote--analyst]

/27 cont./

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15. The complete lack of fertilization methods among the Indians of the Amazon forest is well known. It is only when fallow plots are burned that the depleted soil derives some fertilizing elements from the ashes.

has to seek new sites farther out and set up his gardens ever farther away, so that, after a certain period of time, the Indian group actually lives far from its source of subsistence, until the Indians themselves find transportation of the crops to their homes difficult. Then comes the time to move the village to another /28/ more favorable location. On such occasions, the original (and no doubt the most fitting) form of this reciprocal relation of garden and village becomes apparent.

[633] When a move takes place and a new village is built, the latter lies in the center of the new garden plot of the tuxaua, or chief of the group. The traditional shape of the garden plot is rounded, as already mentioned. In the center of it, the plaza of the new village is cleared, also in rounded shape. Within it, the houses are laid out [342] in a square: the men's house or shed (hoksa), open in front to the [346] east, with the house of the ancestral spirits (kaduke) alongside it; the oval houses for women and children (hok-a) to the right and left; and the square is closed with another hok-a on the east side, if need be.

/Figure 3 appears here./

[621] The nucleus thus formed becomes a new center of the tribal group, of the clan or sib. The garden plot and the village thus form a unit, with the village standing within the first plot. In the years that /29/ follow, the garden plots expand outward. And if the soil is not suitable, the garden is moved farther out, ever farther, until, after a number of years, the need is felt to transfer the village and start all over again. Thus originate the cycles of intraterritorial group migrations.

/29 cont./

From this relationship of garden and village, and also, of garden and community, there results the relatively slight local stability of the tribal groups, which, however, does not reach the stage of nomadism, and perhaps not even that of seminomadism in the strict sense of the term. In fact, there is a certain amount of group migration resulting from the agrarian situation, since it is the soil that forces the Indian to keep moving on. But these migrations are a slow process which is not strikingly noticeable because the moves from one location

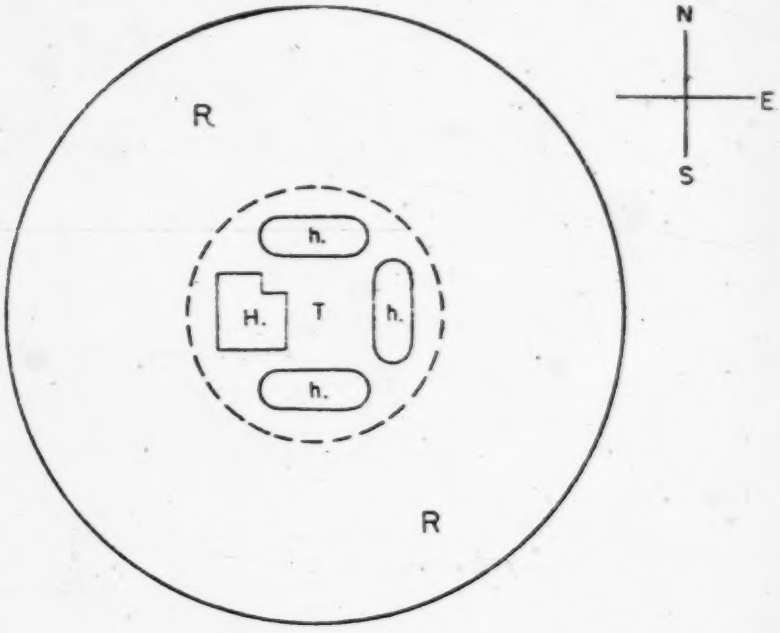


Figure 3. Plan of a Munduruků village
T: plaza; H: hoksa; h: hok-a; R: Garden plots.

/29 cont./

*241 to another only occur at long intervals, within decades, and because
● 361 they occur within a certain well-defined area which is precisely the
166 habitat of the tribe. When these moves overshoot the boundaries of the pertinent territory, the causes must usually be sought in other spheres: in wars, pressure by other tribes, or, as is noted among the present-day Mundurkú, in the influences of trade and of rubber gathering. But, in their original and usual sense, these "internal" migrations, that is, these displacements and movements of groups within the area peculiar to the tribe, are based solely on the agrarian conditions mentioned above. Martius had already said of the Tupí of the upper Tapajós, as quoted earlier: "They practice a primitive agriculture, and therefore, they are not nomads in the strict sense of the term; their villages, however, do not remain immutably in the same place." (16) He had, thus, already noted these moves

16. Martius, 1857: 201.

[182] and had recognized the fact that agriculture was responsible for the greater or lesser stability of the Indian within his territory. In fact, the same thing may be said in a concrete way of the Mundurukú. They are not nomads, precisely because of their agriculture. But neither are they entirely stable within their habitat for the same reason—agriculture—which, owing to soil exhaustion, forces them into repeated moves which, in the last analysis, result in slow internal migrations which I have termed intra-territorial /sic/.

/30/

*241 IV. Native terminology referring to garden plots and cultivated plants
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1) Referring to the garden. (17)

17. The phonetics have been adapted to Portuguese whenever possible. Note the following, however: